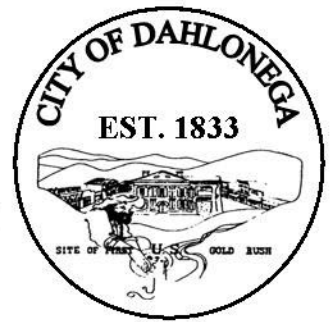


City Limits

News from the Government Offices of Dahlonega, Georgia

Vol.5, No. 2

July 2009



City Throws Gold Museum a Lifeline

Thanks in large part to the determination of Dahlonega Mayor Gary McCullough, it appears the Dahlonega Gold Museum will be rescued from the impact of state budget cuts that lopped two days a week off its operating hours as of July 1. Pending successful finalization of the necessary agreements with the Department of Natural Resources, the centerpiece of Dahlonega's historic Public Square—and its Tourism Industry—should resume seven-day-a-week hours before this Fall's busy visitor season cranks up.

When news of plans to reduce the museum's hours hit town in May, Mayor McCullough led the charge for a solution. He engaged local leaders and citizens to rally for the cause, initiating meetings with the state that ultimately led to a compromise. While he was among the most vocal, the mayor is quick to say the positive outcome is a result of the community working together. "It took commitment from a lot of people to make this happen, and it will take ongoing commitment from all of us to carry it forward," he says. To keep the passion—and Dahlonega's end of the deal—alive, Hal Williams will head up a revitalized Friends of Dahlonega Gold Museum organization.

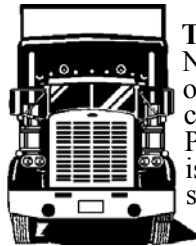
Dahlonega's "end of the deal" requires about \$25,000 in cash to fund the part-time state employees needed to operate the two additional days over the 2009 budget year plus a healthy corps of volunteers to support the staff. Three-quarters of the financial obligation was quickly met with cash donations from the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce, the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority, Dahlonega Merchants Association members and other individuals, along with a sizable commitment of labor from the City of Dahlonega. A volunteer list had 17 names almost immediately.

More (tax deductible) donations and more volunteers are critical to the effort. To help out, call or stop by the Gold Museum or Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center in downtown Dahlonega today.



New Water Statements Fit the Bill—and More

The city's new 8½ X 11, envelope-enclosed water bills, which replaced the post card style bills earlier this summer, are doing their job. They are meeting new federal credit security rules and helping to prevent identity theft by keeping customers' account information private. But the new billing system has turned out to have some extra benefits, as well. The larger, enclosed format allows the city to include more information on the bills or even to add pages to the mailing at no extra mailing cost. A leased machine automates the process of getting the bills ready for mailing, saving staff valuable time that used to be spent manually preparing the post cards for mailout. Receiving payments in the standard-sized return envelopes even saves mail sorting time. And the actual postage costs the same for the enveloped bill as for the post cards. All in all, implementing the new format to meet the federal requirements has been almost a break-even situation on the books. When you factor in the greater staff efficiencies, it turns out to be a pretty good deal.



Trucks B-Gone

Now that Dahlonega owns the roads that carry traffic through the Public Square, the city is in a position to do something about the heavy trucks that have been a detriment

downtown for years. And they did do something about it with the passage of an ordinance in June. The new law prohibits trucks more than 45 feet long and/or 13 feet high, as well as dump trucks and concrete trucks, from passing through the city's Historic District unless they have deliveries to make there. Much of the big rig truck traffic on the square has been from drivers who simply get lost and end up there. New signage along main entrance ways into town shows alternate truck routes. The signs will help drivers stay on the main highways, where most of them want to be anyway, while also making the ordinance enforceable for those truckers who just don't want to follow the rules. Getting trucks off the square is important for several reasons. Besides, spoiling the charming downtown ambiance and tearing up the curbside flowerbeds, large trucks cause ground vibrations that damage the foundations and brick and mortar of the Dahlonega Gold Museum and other historic buildings.

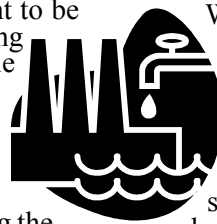
Lighting the Way

Whether you're traveling on wheels or heels, your entrance into downtown Dahlonega will soon be brighter. The city is replacing and adding streetlights along Highway 60 between Crown Mountain and Morrison Moore Parkway and along Highway 19/Grove Street from Lumpkin County High School into town. Georgia Power Company will be removing a dozen old light fixtures and installing 40 updated "mongoose" style lights. The new fixtures will shed more light, too, outfitted with 400 watt, instead of the old 150 watt, bulbs. The city is investing in the improved lighting for the sake of both appearance and function. The streetlights will enhance the appearance of the main entrance corridors, while providing additional security and safety for walkers and joggers.



Waterworks Update

With six months to go until its scheduled February 4 completion date, Dahlonega's new water treatment plant on Morrison Moore Parkway is on schedule and under budget. The framing is complete, the roof is up and the outside "skin" is on, so there's no danger of weather delays slowing things down. Completion of the building's exterior has prompted questions about what the facility will ultimately look like. The city promises a landscaped buffer will enhance the look of the site. An associated project, construction of raw and finished transmission mains, was completed earlier this summer—\$400,000 under budget.



City of Dahlonega . . . continued from reverse side

Like Bricks, But Better, in Crosswalks

The finishing touches were put on three improved downtown Dahlonega crosswalks in June. What looks like brickwork is actually a decorative, heat-activated asphalt surfacing system that complements the character of the Historic District at considerably less expense than real brick. Applied directly to the raised, asphalt crosswalks, the overlay is also more durable and requires less maintenance than brick. The attractive crosswalks help identify safe crossing locations on East Main Street, West Main Street and South Chestatee Street. They're part of an ongoing effort to enhance the pedestrian-friendly feel of the downtown area.



Art & Architecture

Works of a dozen Lumpkin County High School students were on exhibit in the lobby of United Community Bank's main Dahlonega branch over the summer. The young artists created paintings featuring downtown Dahlonega architecture as part of local Georgia Cities Week activities last spring. The artworks were first displayed gallery style at Dahlonega City Hall, where a reception was held for the artists, their families and the owners of the buildings featured in the paintings.



Art and...Vegetables?

Since the Dahlonega Farmers Market is all about high quality, locally produced goods, what makes more sense than to spice up the event with high quality, locally produced art? A partnership between the Downtown Development Authority and the Dahlonega Arts Council pairs a new Artists Market, featuring juried, handcrafted works, with the Farmers Market the first Saturday of each month at Hancock Park. (It's officially the first Saturday, but you can often find artists there on other market days.) The Farmers Market is open each Tuesday and Saturday, from 7am to 3pm, or while supplies last. As always, you'll find a great selection of seasonal fruits and vegetables, along with herbs, honeys and jams and even decorative flowers and plants. Farmers and growers can sell their harvests by purchasing a \$10-per-month permit at City Hall. Those interested in participating in the Artists Market should contact Dennis at 706-867-8134 for details.



Heritage Festival Marks City Birthday

Dahlonega will celebrate its 175th Birthday in conjunction with the first annual Heritage Days antique festival the third weekend in September. There will be antique vendors, period costumes, event reenactments, gold mining demonstrations, and a birthday party in Hancock Park. A number of organizations are involved in planning the event. To help out, call the Chamber at 706-864-3711.



Remember the Music

The streets of downtown Dahlonega are filled with music this summer. The Dahlonega Merchants Association invites you to enjoy the best of traditional mountain music on the Public Square. Gather 'round and listen or bring



Park Sign Tells Story of Maibaum Tree

Dahlonega's Maibaum Tree, an ironwork depiction of the city's history erected in conjunction with local Millennium festivities in the year 2000, was temporarily removed from Hancock Park during the park's recent renovation. It has now been re-installed, along with a new interpretive sign explaining the symbolism on its "branches." The plaque was made possible with money remaining from the fundraising efforts of Jean Cuthbertson and the Millennium Committee 10 years ago, along with new contributions from the Lumpkin County Historical Society and the Downtown Development Authority. City crews installed the "tree." While they were at it, they also re-installed the park's brick walkway, swings and benches. A new plaque on the pavilion recognizes the contributions of the Dahlonega Rotary Club and the Dahlonega City Council to the popular park.



an instrument and join in the Appalachian Jam sessions each Saturday from 2pm to 6pm on the grounds of the Dahlonega Gold Museum. And don't miss the First Friday Night Concert Series, which features various styles of music in casual, outdoor concerts at Hancock Park the first Friday of each month at 6:30. Kurt Thomas is next up on Aug. 7. The Concert Series is supported in part by the Grassroots Arts Program of the Georgia Council for the Arts and in partnership with the Sustainable Arts Society in Blue Ridge. Appalachian Jams and First Friday concerts are produced by the City of Dahlonega's Better Hometown Program and the Downtown Development Authority. (Join the Jam Facebook group today. From the Facebook page, search groups for "Dahlonega Appalachian Jam." See you there!)

How May We Be of Service?



Question? Comment? Problem? Call City Hall at (706) 864-6133. We'll put you in touch with the right person.

City Council

Gary McCullough, Mayor
Johnny Ariemma
Michael Clemons
Gerald Lord
Sam Norton
Terry Peters
Ralph Prescott

Bill Lewis, City Manager

Please join us at our meetings!

Learn about your government by attending public meetings like these. Find the complete schedule at www.cityofdahlonega.com.

City Council: 1st Monday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

Planning/Zoning Commission: 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm—City Hall

Historic Preservation

Commission: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority: 2nd Thursday of each month at 8:30am--City Hall

City of Dahlonega
A Better Hometown/
Main Street Community
465 Riley Rd.
Dahlonega, Georgia 30533
Phone 706-864-6133
Fax 706-864-4837
e-mail:
cityofdahlonega@windstream.net
www.cityofdahlonega.com